DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 377 665 EC 303 594

TITLE	The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education. Adopted by the World Conference on Special Needs Education: Access and Quality (Salamanca, Spain, June 7-10, 1994).
INSTITUTION	Ministry of Education and Science, Madrid (Spain).; United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization, Paris (France).
REPORT NO	ED-94-WS/18
PUB DATE	Jun 94
NOTE	52p.
PUB TYPE	Viewpoints (Opinion/Position Papers, Essays, etc.) (120)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Disabilities; Early Childhood Education; Educational Change; Educational Development; Educational Policy; Elementary Secondary Education; Foreign Countries; Gifted; *Inclusive Schools; International Organizations; Normalization (Disabilities); *Policy Formation; *Position Papers; *Social Action; Social Integration
IDENTIFIERS	*UNESCO

ABSTRACT

This statement was adopted by more than 300 participants representing 92 governments and 25 international organizations who met in Salamanca, Spain, to promote inclusive education. The statement and accompanying framework for action represent a worldwide consensus on future directions for special needs education. The statement affirms the right to education of every individual regardless of individual differences, within the regular education system and the right of children with special educational needs to receive whatever extra support they may require to ensure their effective education. Governments are urged to give the highest policy and budgetary priority to improve education systems; adopt the principle of inclusive education; invest greater effort in early identification, intervention, and vocational education; and take other actions. The international community is urged to intensify its involvement in inclusive education. A framework for action offers guidelines for action at the national level, in the following areas: policy and organization, school factors, recruitment and training of educational personnel, external support services, priority areas, community perspectives, and resource requirements. Additional guidelines are offered for action at the regional and international level. (JDD)

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ED 377 665

THE SALAMANCA STATEMENT AND FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION

ON SPECIAL NEEDS EDUCATION

WORLD CONFERENCE
ON SPECIAL NEEDS EDUCATION:
ACCESS AND QUALITY

Salamanca, Spain, 7-10 June 1994

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Preface

More than 300 participants representing 92 governments and 25 international organizations met in Salamanca, Spain, from 7 to 10 June 1994 to further the objective of Education for All by considering the fundamental policy shifts required to promote the approach of inclusive education, namely enabling schools to serve all children, particularly those with special educational needs. Organized by the Government of Spain in co-operation with UNESCO, the Conference brought together senior education officials, administrators, policy-makers and specialists, as well as representatives of the United Nations and the Specialized Agencies, other international governmental organizations, non-governmental organizations and donor agencies. The Conference adopted the Salamanca Statement on Principles, Policy and Practice in Special Needs Education and a Framework for Action. These documents are informed by the principle of inclusion, by recognition of the need to work towards "schools for all" – institutions which include everybody, celebrate differences, support learning, and respond to individual needs. As such, they constitute an important contribution to the agenda for achieving Education for All and for making schools educationally more effective.

Special needs education – an issue of equal concern to countries of the North and of the South – cannot advance in isolation. It has to form part of an overall educational strategy and, indeed, of new

social and economic policies. It calls for major reform of the ordinary school.

These documents represent a worldwide consensus on future directions for special needs education. UNESCO is proud to be associated with this Conference and its important conclusions. All concerned must now rise to the challenge and work to ensure that Education for All effectively means FOR ALL, particularly those who are most vulnerable and most in need. The future is not fated, but will be fashioned by our values, thoughts and actions. Our success in the years ahead will depend not so much on what we do as what we achieve.

It is my hope that all readers of this document will help to enact the recommendations of the Salamanca Conference by endeavouring to translate its message into practice within their respective fields of responsibility.

Federico Mayor

EC

THE SALAMANCA STATEMENT

ON PRINCIPLES, POLICY AND PRACTICE
IN SPECIAL NEEDS EDUCATION

Reaffirming the right to education of every individual, as enshrined in the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and renewing the pledge made by the world community at the 1990 World Conference on Education for All to ensure that right for all regardless of individual differences,

Recalling the several United Nations declarations culminating in the 1993 United Nations Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities, which urges States to ensure that the education of persons with disabilities is an integral part of the education system,

Noting with satisfaction the increased involvement of governments, advocacy groups, community and parent groups, and in particular organizations of persons with disabilities, in seeking to improve access to education for the majority of those with special needs still unreached; and recognizing as evidence of this involvement the active participation of highlevel representatives of numerous governments, specialized agencies and intergovernmental organizations in this World Conference,

1.

We, the delegates of the World Conference on Special Needs Education representing ninety-two governments and twenty-five international organizations, assembled here in Salamanca, Spain, from 7-10 June 1994, hereby reaffirm our commitment to Education for All, recognizing the necessity and urgency of providing education for children, youth and adults with special educational needs within the regular education system, and further hereby endorse the Framework for Action on Special Needs Education, that governments and organizations may be guided by the spirit of its provisions and recommendations.

2.

We believe and proclaim that:

- every child has a fundamental right to education, and must be given the opportunity to achieve and maintain an acceptable level of learning,
- every child has unique characteristics, interests, abilities and learning needs,
- education systems should be designed and educational programmes implemented to take into account the wide diversity of these characteristics and needs,
- those with special educational needs must have access to regular schools which should accommodate them within a childcentred pedagogy capable of meeting these needs,

- regular schools with this inclusive orientation are the most effective means of combating discriminatory attitudes, creating welcoming communities, building an inclusive society and achieving education for all; moreover, they provide an effective education to the majority of children and improve the efficiency and ultimately the cost-effectiveness of the entire education system.

3.

We call upon all governments and urge them to:

- give the highest policy and budgetary priority to improve their education systems to enable them to include all children regardless of individual differences or difficulties,
- adopt as a matter of law or policy the principle of inclusive education, enrolling all children in regular schools, unless there are compelling reasons for doing otherwise,
- develop demonstration projects and encourage exchanges with countries having experience with inclusive schools,
- establish decentralized and participatory mechanisms for planning, monitoring and evaluating educational provision for children and adults with special education needs,
- encourage and facilitate the participation of parents, communities and organization of persons with disabilities in the planning and decisionmaking processes concerning provision for special educational needs,
- invest greater effort in early identification and intervention strategies, as well as in vocational aspects of inclusive education,

- ensure that, in the context of a systemic change, teacher education programmes, both preservice and inservice, address the provision of special needs education in inclusive schools.

4.

We also call upon the international community; in particular we call upon:

- governments with international cooperation programmes and international funding agencies, especially the sponsors of the World Conference on Education for All, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the World Bank:
  - to endorse the approach of inclusive schooling and to support the development of special needs education as an integral part of all education programmes;
  - the United Nations and its specialized agencies, in particular the International Labour Office (ILO), the World Health Organization (WHO), UNESCO and UNICEF:
  - to strengthen their inputs for technical cooperation, as well as to reinforce their cooperation and networking for more efficient support to the expanded and integrated provision of special needs education;
- non-governmental organizations involved in country programming and service delivery:

- to strengthen their collaboration with the official national bodies and to intensify their growing involvement in planning, implementation and evaluation of inclusive provision for special educational needs;

• UNESCO, as the United Nations agency for education:

- to ensure that special needs education forms part of every discussion dealing with education for all in various forums,
- to mobilize the support of organizations of the teaching profession in matters related to enhancing teacher education as regards provision for special educational needs,
- to stimulate the academic community to strengthen research and networking and to establish regional centres of information and documentation; also, to serve as a clearinghouse for such activities and for disseminating the specific results and progress achieved at country level in pursuance of this Statement,
- to mobilize funds through the creation within its next Medium-Term Plan (1996-2002) of an expanded programme for inclusive schools and community support programmes, which would enable the launching of pilot projects that showcase new approaches for dissemination, and to develop indicators concerning the need for and provision of special needs education.

5.

Finally, we express our warm appreciation to the Government of Spain and to UNESCO for the organization of the Conference, and we urge them to make every effort to bring this Statement and the accompanying Framework for Action to the attention of the world community, especially at such important forums as the World Summit for Social Development (Copenhagen, 1995) and the World Conference on Women (Beijing, 1995).

Adopted by acclamation, in the city of Salamanca, Spain, on this 10th of June, 1994.

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FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION

ON SPECIAL NEEDS EDUCATION

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Introduction

1. This **Framework for Action on Special Needs Education** was adopted by the World Conference on Special Needs Education organized by the Government of Spain in co-operation with UNESCO and held in Salamanca from 7 to 10 June 1994. Its purpose is to inform policy and guide action by governments, international organizations, national aid agencies, non-governmental organizations and other bodies in implementing the **Salamanca Statement on Principles, Policy and Practice in Special Needs Education**. The **Framework** draws extensively upon the national experience of the participating countries as well as upon resolutions, recommendations and publications of the United Nations system and other intergovernmental organizations, especially the **Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities**[1]. It also takes account of the proposals, guidelines and recommendations arising from the five regional seminars held to prepare the World Conference.

2. The right of every child to an education is proclaimed in the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights** and was forcefully reaffirmed by the **World Declaration on Education for All**.

[1] United Nations Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities, A/RES/48/96, United Nations Resolution adopted by the General Assembly at its 48th session on 20 December 1993.

Every person with a disability has a right to express their wishes with regard to their education, as far as this can be ascertained. Parents have an inherent right to be consulted on the form of education best suited to the needs, circumstances and aspirations of their children.

3. The guiding principle that informs this **Framework** is that schools should accommodate **all children** regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic or other conditions. This should include disabled and gifted children, street and working children, children from remote or nomadic populations, children from linguistic, ethnic or cultural minorities and children from other disadvantaged or marginalized areas or groups. These conditions create a range of different challenges to school systems. In the context of this Framework, the term 'special educational needs' refers to all those children and youth whose needs arise from disabilities or learning difficulties. Many children experience learning difficulties and thus have special educational needs at some time during their schooling. Schools have to find ways of successfully educating all children, including those who have serious disadvantages and disabilities. There is an emerging consensus that children and youth with special educational needs should be included in the educational arrangements made for the majority of children. This has led to the concept of the inclusive school. The challenge confronting the inclusive school is that of developing a child-centred pedagogy capable of successfully educating all children, including those who have serious disadvantages and disabilities. The merit of such schools is not only that they are capable of providing quality education to all children; their establishment is a crucial step in helping to change discriminatory attitudes, in creating welcoming communities and in developing an inclusive

society. A change in social perspective is imperative. For far too long, the problems of people with disabilities have been compounded by a disabling society that has focused upon their impairments rather than their potential.

4. Special needs education incorporates the proven principles of sound pedagogy from which all children may benefit. It assumes that human differences are normal and that learning must accordingly be adapted to the needs of the child rather than the child fitted to preordained assumptions regarding the pace and nature of the learning process. A child-centred pedagogy is beneficial to all students and, as a consequence, to society as a whole. Experience has demonstrated that it can substantially reduce the drop-out and repetition that are so much a part of many education systems while ensuring higher average levels of achievement. A child-centred pedagogy can help to avoid the waste of resources and the shattering of hopes that is all too frequently a consequence of poor quality instruction and a 'one size fits all' mentality towards education. Child-centred schools are, moreover, the training ground for a people-oriented society that respects both the differences and the dignity of all human beings.

5. This **Framework for Action** comprises the following sections:
   I. New thinking in special needs education
   II. Guidelines for action at the national level
      A. Policy and organization
      B. School factors
      C. Recruitment and training of educational personnel
      D. External support services
      E. Priority areas
      F. Community perspectives
      G. Resource requirements
   III. Guidelines for action at the regional and international level.

I

NEW THINKING IN SPECIAL NEEDS EDUCATION

6. The trend in social policy during the past two decades has been to promote integration and participation and to combat exclusion. Inclusion and participation are essential to human dignity and to the enjoyment and exercise of human rights. Within the field of education, this is reflected in the development of strategies that seek to bring about a genuine equalization of opportunity. Experience in many countries demonstrates that the integration of children and youth with special educational needs is best achieved within inclusive schools that serve all children within a community. It is within this context that those with special educational needs can achieve the fullest educational progress and social integration. While inclusive schools provide a favourable setting for achieving equal opportunity and full participation, their success requires a concerted effort, not only by teachers and school staff, but also by peers, parents, families and volunteers. The reform of social institutions is not only a technical task; it depends, above all, upon the conviction, commitment and good will of the individuals who constitute society.

7. The fundamental principle of the inclusive school is that all children should learn together, wherever possible, regardless of any difficulties or differences they may have. Inclusive schools must recognize and respond to the diverse needs of their students, accomodating both different styles and rates of

learning and ensuring quality education to all through appropriate curricula, organizational arrangements, teaching strategies, resource use and partnerships with their communities. There should be a continuum of support and services to match the continuum of special needs encountered in every school.

8. Within inclusive schools, children with special educational needs should receive whatever extra support they may require to ensure their effective education. Inclusive schooling is the most effective means for building solidarity between children with special needs and their peers. Assignment of children to special schools – or special classes or sections within a school on a permanent basis – should be the exception, to be recommended only in those infrequent cases where it is clearly demonstrated that education in regular classrooms is incapable of meeting a child's educational or social needs or when it is required for the welfare of the child or that of other children.

9. The situation regarding special needs education varies enormously from one country to another. There are, for example, countries that have well established systems of special schools for those with specific impairments. Such special schools can represent a valuable resource for the development of inclusive schools. The staff of these special institutions possess the expertise needed for early screening and identification of children with disabilities. Special schools can also serve as training and resource centres for staff in regular schools. Finally, special schools or units within inclusive schools – may continue to provide the most suitable education for the relatively small number of children with disabilities who cannot be adequately served in regular classrooms or schools. Investment in existing special schools should be geared to their new and expanded role of providing professional support to

regular schools in meeting special educational needs. An important contribution to ordinary schools, which the staff of special schools can make, is to the matching of curricular content and method to the individual needs of pupils.

10. Countries that have few or no special schools would, in general, be well advised to concentrate their efforts on the development of inclusive schools and the specialized services needed to enable them to serve the vast majority of children and youth – especially provision of teacher training in special needs education and the establishment of suitably staffed and equipped resource centres to which schools could turn for support. Experience, especially in developing countries, indicates that the high cost of special schools means, in practice, that only a small minority of students, usually an urban élite, benefit from them. The vast majority of students with special needs, especially in rural areas, are as a consequence provided with no services whatsoever. Indeed, in many developing countries, it is estimated that fewer than 1 per cent of children with special educational needs are included in existing provision. Experience, moreover, suggests that inclusive schools, serving all of the children in a community, are most successful in eliciting community support and in finding imaginative and innovative ways of using the limited resources that are available.

11. Educational planning by governments should concentrate on education for **all** persons, in **all** regions of a country and in **all** economic conditions, through both public and private schools.

12. Because in the past relatively few children with disabilities have had access to education, especially in the developing regions of the world, there are millions of adults with disabilities who lack even the rudiments of a basic education. A

concerted effort is thus required to teach literacy, numeracy and basic skills to persons with disabilities through adult education programmes.

13. It is particularly important to recognize that women have often been doubly disadvantaged, bias based on gender compounding the difficulties caused by their disabilities. Women and men should have equal influence on the design of educational programmes and the same opportunities to benefit from them. Special efforts should be made to encourage the participation of girls and women with disabilities in educational programmes.

14. This **Framework** is intended as an overall guide to planning action in special needs education. It evidently cannot take account of the vast variety of situations encountered in the different regions and countries of the world and must, accordingly, be adapted to fit local requirements and circumstances. To be effective, it must be complemented by national, regional and local plans of action inspired by a political and popular will to achieve **education for all**.

II

GUIDELINES FOR ACTION AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL

A. POLICY AND ORGANIZATION

15. *Integrated education and community-based rehabilitation represent complementary and mutually supportive approaches to serving those with special needs. Both are based upon the principles of inclusion, integration and participation, and represent well-tested and cost-effective approaches to promoting equality of access for those with special educational needs as part of a nationwide strategy aimed at achieving* ***education for all.*** *Countries are invited to consider the following actions concerning the policy and organization of their education systems.*

16. Legislation should recognize the principle of equality of opportunity for children, youth and adults with disabilities in primary, secondary and tertiary education carried out, in so far as possible, in integrated settings.

17. Parallel and complementary legislative measures should be adopted in the fields of health, social welfare, vocational training and employment in order to support and give full effect to educational legislation.

18. Educational policies at all levels, from the national to the local, should stipulate that a child with a disability should attend the neighbourhood school that is, the school that would be attended if the child did not have a disability. Exceptions to this rule

should be considered on a case-by-case basis where only education in a special school or establishment can be shown to meet the needs of the individual child.

19. The practice of 'mainstreaming' children with disabilities should be an integral part of national plans for achieving **education for all**. Even in those exceptional cases where children are placed in special schools, their education need not be entirely segregated. Part-time attendance at regular schools should be encouraged. Necessary provision should also be made for ensuring inclusion of youth and adults with special needs in secondary and higher education as well as in training programmes. Special attention should be given to ensuring equality of access and opportunity for girls and women with disabilities.

20. Special attention should be paid to the needs of children and youth with severe or multiple disabilities. They have the same rights as others in the community to the achievement of maximum independence as adults and should be educated to the best of their potential towards that end.

21. Educational policies should take full account of individual differences and situations. The importance of sign language as the medium of communication among the deaf, for example, should be recognized and provision made to ensure that all deaf persons have access to education in their national sign language. Owing to the particular communication needs of deaf and deaf/blind persons, their education may be more suitably provided in special schools or special classes and units in mainstream schools.

22. Community-based rehabilitation should be developed as part of a global strategy for supporting cost-effective education and training for people with special educational needs. Community-

based rehabilitation should be seen as a specific approach within community development aimed at rehabilitation, equalization of opportunities and social integration of all people with disabilities; it should be implemented through the combined efforts of people with disabilities themselves, their families and communities, and the appropriate education, health, vocational and welfare services.

23. Both policies and financing arrangements should encourage and facilitate the development of inclusive schools. Barriers that impede movement from special to regular schools should be removed and a common administrative structure organized. Progress towards inclusion should be carefully monitored through the collection of statistics capable of revealing the number of students with disabilities who benefit from resources, expertise and equipment intended for special needs education as well as the number of students with special educational needs enrolled in regular schools.

24. Co-ordination between educational authorities and those responsible for health, employment and social services should be strengthened at all levels to bring about convergence and complementarity. Planning and co-ordination should also take account of the actual and potential role that semi-public agencies and non-governmental organizations can play. A particular effort needs to be made to elicit community support in meeting special educational needs.

25. National authorities have a responsibility to monitor external funding to special needs education and, working in co-operation with their international partners, to ensure that it corresponds to national priorities and policies aimed at achieving **education for all**. Bilateral and multilateral aid agencies, for their part, should carefully consider national

policies in respect of special needs education in planning and implementing programmes in education and related fields.

B. SCHOOL FACTORS

26. *Developing inclusive schools that cater for a wide range of pupils in both urban and rural areas requires: the articulation of a clear and forceful policy on inclusion together with adequate financial provision – an effective public information effort to combat prejudice and create informed and positive attitudes – an extensive programme of orientation and staff training – and the provision of necessary support services. Changes in all the following aspects of schooling, as well as many others, are necessary to contribute to the success of inclusive schools: curriculum, buildings, school organization, pedagogy, assessment, staffing, school ethos and extra-curricular activities.*

27. Most of the required changes do not relate exclusively to the inclusion of children with special educational needs. They are part of a wider reform of education needed to improve its quality and relevance and to promote higher levels of learning achievement by all pupils. The **World Declaration on Education for All** underscored the need for a child-centred approach aimed at ensuring the successful schooling of all children. The adoption of more flexible, adaptive systems capable of taking fuller account of the different needs of children will contribute both to educational success and

inclusion. The following guidelines focus on points to be considered in integrating children with special educational needs into inclusive schools.

Curriculum flexibility

28. Curricula should be adapted to children's needs, not vice-versa. Schools should therefore provide curricular opportunities to suit children with different abilities and interests.

29. Children with special needs should receive additional instructional support in the context of the regular curriculum, not a different curriculum. The guiding principle should be to provide all children with the same education, providing additional assistance and support to children requiring it.

30. The acquisition of knowledge is not only a matter of formal and theoretical instruction. The content of education should be geared to high standards and the needs of individuals with a view to enabling them to participate fully in development. Teaching should be related to pupils' own experience and to practical concerns in order to motivate them better.

31. In order to follow the progress of each child, assessment procedures should be reviewed. Formative evaluation should be incorporated into the regular educational process in order to keep pupils and teachers informed of the learning mastery attained as well as to identify difficulties and assist pupils to overcome them.

32. For children with special educational needs a continuum of support should be provided, ranging from minimal help in regular classrooms to additional learning support programmes within the school and extending, where necessary, to the

provision of assistance from specialist teachers and external support staff.

33. Appropriate and affordable technology should be used when necessary to enhance success in the school curriculum and to aid communication, mobility and learning. Technical aids can be offered in a more economical and effective way if they are provided from a central pool in each locality, where there is expertise in matching aids to individual needs and in ensuring maintenance.

34. Capability should be built up and research carried out at national and regional levels to develop appropriate support technology systems for special needs education. States that have ratified the Florence Agreement should be encouraged to use this instrument to facilitate the free circulation of materials and equipment related to the needs of people with disabilities. Concurrently States that have not adhered to the Agreement are invited to do so in order to facilitate the free circulation of services and goods of educational and cultural nature.

School management

35. Local administrators and school heads can play a major role in making schools more responsive to children with special educational needs if they are given necessary authority and adequate training to do so. They should be invited to develop more flexible management procedures, to redeploy instructional resources, to diversify learning options, to mobilize child-to-child help, to offer support to pupils experiencing difficulties and to develop close relations with parents and the community. Successful school management depends upon the active and creative involvement of teachers

and staff, and the development of effective co-operation and team work to meet the needs of students.

36. School heads have a special responsibility in promoting positive attitudes throughout the school community and in arranging for effective co-operation between class teachers and support staff. Appropriate arrangements for support and the exact role to be played by various partners in the educational process should be decided through consultation and negotiation.

37. Each school should be a community collectively accountable for the success or failure of every student. The educational team, rather than the individual teacher, should share the responsibility for the education of special needs children. Parents and volunteers should be invited to take an active part in the work of the school. Teachers, however, play a key role as the managers of the educational process, supporting children through the use of available resources both within and outside of the classroom.

Information and research

38. The dissemination of examples of good practice could help to improve teaching and learning. Information on relevant research findings would also be valuable. Pooling of experience and the development of documentation centres should be supported at national level, and access to sources of information broadened.

39. Special needs education should be integrated into the research and development programmes of research institutions and curriculum development centres. Particular attention should be given in this area to action-research focusing on innovative

teaching-learning strategies. Classroom teachers should participate actively in both the action and reflection involved in such inquiries. Pilot experiments and in-depth studies should also be launched to assist in decision-making and in guiding future action. These experiments and studies could be carried out on a co-operative basis by several countries.

C. RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING OF EDUCATIONAL PERSONNEL

40. *Appropriate preparation of all educational personnel stands out as a key factor in promoting progress towards inclusive schools. Furthermore, the importance of recruiting teachers with disabilities who can serve as role models for children with disabilities is increasingly recognized. The following actions could be taken.*

41. Pre-service training programmes should provide to all student teachers, primary and secondary alike, positive orientation toward disability, thereby developing an understanding of what can be achieved in schools with locally available support services. The knowledge and skills required are mainly those of good teaching and include assessing special needs, adapting curriculum content, utilizing assistive technology, individualizing teaching procedures to suit a larger range of abilities, etc. In teacher-training practice schools, specific attention should be given to preparing all teachers to exercise their autonomy and apply their skills in adapting curricula and instruction to meet pupils needs as well as to collaborate with specialists and co-operate with parents.

42. The skills required to respond to special educational needs should be taken into account during assessment of studies and teacher certification.

43. As a matter of priority, written materials should be prepared and seminars organized for local administrators, supervisors, headteachers and senior teachers to develop their capacity to provide leadership in this area and to support and train less-experienced teaching staff.

44. The major challenge lies in providing in-service training to all teachers, taking into account the varied and often difficult conditions under which they serve. In-service training should, wherever possible, be developed at school level by means of interaction with trainers and supported by distance education and other self-instruction techniques.

45. Specialized training in special needs education leading to additional qualifications should normally be integrated with or preceeded by training and experience as a regular education teacher in order to ensure complementarity and mobility.

46. The training of special teachers needs to be reconsidered with a view to enabling them to work in different settings and to play a key role in special educational needs programmes. A non-categorical approach encompassing all types of disabilities should be developed as a common core, prior to further specialization in one or more disability-specific areas.

47. Universities have a major advisory role to play in the process of developing special needs education, especially as regards research, evaluation, preparation of teacher trainers, and designing training programmes and materials. Networking among universities and institutions of higher learning in developed and developing countries should be promoted. Linking research and training in this way is of great

significance. It is also important to actively involve people with disabilities in research and training roles in order to ensure that their perspectives are taken fully into account.

48. A recurrent problem with education systems, even those that provide excellent educational services for students with disabilities, is the lack of role models for such students. Special needs students require opportunities to interact with adults with disabilities who have achieved success so that they can pattern their own lifestyles and aspirations on realistic expectations. In addition, students with disabilities should be given training and provided with examples of disability empowerment and leadership so that they can assist in shaping the policies that will affect them in later life. Education systems should therefore seek to recruit qualified teachers and other educational personnel who have disabilities and should also seek to involve successful individuals with disabilities from within the region in the education of special needs children.

D. EXTERNAL SUPPORT SERVICES

49. *Provision of support services is of paramount importance for the success of inclusive educational policies. In order to ensure that, at all levels, external services are made available to children with special needs, educational authorities should consider the following.*

50. Support to ordinary schools could be provided by both teacher-education institutions and by the outreach staff of special schools. The latter should be used increasingly as resource centres for ordinary schools offering direct support to those children with special educational needs. Both training institutions and special schools can provide access to specific devices and materials as well as training in instructional strategies that are not provided in regular classrooms.

51. External support by resource personnel from various agencies, departments and institutions, such as advisory teachers, educational psychologists, speech and occupational therapists, etc., should be co-ordinated at the local level. School clusters have proved a useful strategy in mobilizing educational resources as well as community involvement. Clusters of schools could be assigned collective responsibility for meeting the special educational needs of pupils in their area and given scope for allocating resources as required. Such arrangements

should involve non-educational services as well. Indeed, experience suggests that education services would benefit significantly if greater efforts were made to ensure optimal use of all available expertise and resources.

E. PRIORITY AREAS

52. *Integration of children and young people with special educational needs would be more effective and successful if special consideration were given in educational development plans to the following target areas: early childhood education to enhance the educability of all children, girls' education and the transition from education to adult working life.*

Early childhood education

53. The success of the inclusive school depends considerably on early identification, assessment and stimulation of the very young child with special educational needs. Early childhood care and education programmes for children aged up to 6 years ought to be developed and/or reoriented to promote physical, intellectual and social development and school readiness. These programmes have a major economic value for the individual, the family and the society in preventing the aggravation of disabling conditions. Programmes at this level should recognize the principle of inclusion and be developed in a comprehensive way by combining pre-school activities and early childhood health care.

54. Many countries have adopted policies in favour of early childhood education, either by supporting the development of

kindergartens and day nurseries or by organizing family information and awareness activities in conjunction with community services (health, maternal and infant care), schools and local family or women's associations.

Girls' education

55. Girls with disabilities are doubly disadvantaged. A special effort is required to provide training and education for girls with special educational needs. In addition to gaining access to school, girls with disabilities should have access to information and guidance as well as to models which could help them to make realistic choices and preparation for their future role as adult women.

Preparation for adult life

56. Young people with special educational needs should be helped to make an effective transition from school to adult working life. Schools should assist them to become economically active and provide them with the skills needed in everyday life, offering training in skills which respond to the social and communication demands and expectations of adult life. This calls for appropriate training technologies, including direct experience in real life situations outside school. Curricula for students with special educational needs in senior classes should include specific transitional programmes, support to enter higher education whenever possible and subsequent vocational training preparing them to function as independent, contributing members of their communities after leaving school. These activities should be carried out with the active

involvement of vocational guidance counsellors, placement offices, trade unions, local authorities, and the different services and agencies concerned.

Adult and continuing education

57. Persons with disabilities should be given special attention in the design and implementation of adult and continuing education programmes. Persons with disabilities should be given priority access to such programmes. Special courses should also be designed to suit the needs and conditions of different groups of adults with disabilities.

F. COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

58. *Realizing the goal of successful education of children with special educational needs is not the task of the Ministries of Education and schools alone. It requires the co-operation of families, and the mobilization of the community and voluntary organizations as well as the support of the public-at-large. Experience from countries or areas that have witnessed progress in equalizing educational opportunities for children and youth with special educational needs suggests several useful lessons.*

Parent partnership

59. The education of children with special educational needs is a shared task of parents and professionals. A positive attitude on the part of parents favours school and social integration. Parents need support in order to assume the role of a parent of a child with special needs. The role of families and parents could be enhanced by the provision of necessary information in simple and clear language; addressing the needs for information and training in parenting skills is a particularly important task in cultural env[illegible] where there is little tradition of schooling. Both [illegible] teachers may need

support and encouragement in learning to work together as equal partners.

60. Parents are privileged partners as regards the special educational needs of their child, and to the extent possible should be accorded the choice in the type of education provision they desire for their child.

61. A co-operative, supportive partnership between school administrators, teachers and parents should be developed and parents regarded as active partners in decision-making. Parents should be encouraged to participate in educational activities at home and at school (where they could observe effective techniques and learn how to organize extra-curricular activities), as well as in the supervision and support of their children's learning.

62. Governments should take a lead in promoting parental partnership, through both statements of policy and legislation concerning parental rights. The development of parents' associations should be promoted and their representatives involved in the design and implementation of programmes intended to enhance the education of their children. Organizations of people with disabilities should also be consulted concerning the design and implementation of programmes.

Community involvement

63. Decentralization and local-area-based planning favours greater involvement of communities in education and training of people with special educational needs. Local administrators should encourage community participation by giving support to

representative associations and inviting them to take part in decision-making. To this end, mobilizing and monitoring mechanisms composed of local civil administration, educational, health and development authorities, community leaders and voluntary organizations should be established in geographical areas small enough to ensure meaningful community participation.

64. Community involvement should be sought in order to supplement in-school activities, provide help in doing homework and compensate for lack of family support. Mention should be made in this connection of the role of neighbourhood associations in making premises available, the role of family associations, youth clubs and movements, and the potential role of elderly people and other volunteers, including persons with disabilities, in both in-school and out-of-school programmes.

65. Whenever action for community-based rehabilitation is initiated from outside, it is the community that must decide whether the programme will become part of the ongoing community development activities. Various partners in the community, including organizations of persons with disabilities and other non-governmental organizations, should be empowered to take responsibility for the programme. Where appropriate, government agencies at both the national and local level should also lend financial and other support.

Role of voluntary organizations

66. As voluntary associations and national non-governmental organizations have more freedom to act and can respond more readily to expressed needs, they should be supported in developing new ideas and pioneering innovative delivery

methods. They can play the roles of innovator and catalyst and extend the range of programmes available to the community.

67. Organizations of people with disabilities i.e., those in which they themselves have the decisive influence – should be invited to take an active part in identifying needs, expressing views on priorities, administering services, evaluating performance and advocating change.

Public awareness

68. Policy-makers at all levels, including the school level, should regularly reaffirm their commitment to inclusion and promote positive attitudes among children, among teachers and among the public-at-large towards those with special educational needs.

69. Mass media can play a powerful role in promoting positive attitudes towards the integration of disabled persons in society, overcoming prejudice and misinformation, and infusing greater optimism and imagination about the capabilities of persons with disabilities. The media can also promote positive attitudes of employers toward hiring persons with disabilities. The media should be used to inform the public on new approaches in education, particularly as regards provision for special needs education in regular schools, by popularizing examples of good practice and successful experiences.

G. RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS

70. *The development of inclusive schools as the most effective means for achieving education for all must be recognized as a key government policy and accorded a privileged place on the nation's development agenda. It is only in this way that adequate resources can be obtained. Changes in policies and priorities cannot be effective unless adequate resource requirements are met. Political commitment, at both the national and community level, is needed both to obtain additional resources and to redeploy existing ones. While communities must play a key role in developing inclusive schools, government encouragement and support is also essential in devising effective and affordable solutions.*

71. The distribution of resources to schools should take realistic account of the differences in expenditure required to provide appropriate education for all children, bearing in mind their needs and circumstances. It may be realistic to begin by supporting those schools that wish to promote inclusive education and to launch pilot projects in some areas in order to gain the necessary expertise for expansion and progressive generalization. In the generalization of inclusive education, the level of support and expertise will have to be matched to the nature of the demand.

72. Resources must also be allocated to support services for the training of mainstream teachers, for the provision of resource centres and for special education teachers or resource teachers. Appropriate technical aids to ensure the successful operation of an integrated education system must also be provided. Integrated approaches should, therefore, be linked to the development of support services at central and intermediate levels.

73. Pooling the human, institutional, logistic, material and financial resources of various ministerial departments (Education, Health, Social Welfare, Labour, Youth, etc.), territorial and local authorities, and other specialized institutions is an effective way to maximize their impact. Combining both an educational and a social approach to special needs education will require effective management structures enabling the various services to co-operate at both national and local levels, and allowing the public authorities and associative bodies to join forces.

III

GUIDELINES FOR ACTION AT THE REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL LEVEL

74. *International co-operation among governmental and non-governmental, regional and interregional organizations can play a very important role in supporting the move towards inclusive schools. Based on past experience in this area, international organizations, intergovernmental and non-governmental as well as bilateral donor agencies, could consider joining forces in implementing the following strategic approaches.*

75. Technical assistance should be directed to strategic fields of intervention with a multiplier effect, especially in developing countries. One important task for international co-operation is to support the launching of pilot projects aimed at trying out new approaches and at capacity building.

76. The organization of regional partnerships or partnership among countries with similar approaches in special needs education could result in the planning of joint activities under the auspices of existing regional or other co-operative mechanisms. Such activities should be designed to take advantage of economies of scale, to draw upon the experience of participating countries, and to further the development of national capabilities.

77. A priority mission incumbent upon international organizations is to facilitate exchange of data, information and results of pilot

programmes in special needs education between countries and regions. Collection of internationally comparable indicators of progress in inclusion in education and employment should become a part of the worldwide database on education. Focal points might be established in sub-regional centres in order to facilitate information exchanges. Existing structures at the regional and international levels should be strengthened and their activities extended to such fields as policies, programming, training of personnel and evaluation.

78. A high percentage of disability is the direct result of lack of information, poverty and low health standards. As the worldwide prevalence of disabilities is increasing, particularly in the developing countries, there should be joint international action in close collaboration with national efforts to prevent the causes of disability through education which, in turn, would reduce the incidence and prevalence of disabilities, thereby further reducing the demands on the limited financial and human resources of a country.

79. International and technical assistance to special needs education derives from numerous sources. It is, therefore, essential to ensure coherence and complementarity among organizations of the United Nations system and other agencies lending assistance in this area.

80. International co-operation should support advanced training seminars for educational managers and other specialists at the regional level and foster co-operation between university departments and training institutions in different countries for conducting comparative studies as well as for the publication of reference documents and instructional materials.

81. International co-operation should assist in the development of regional and international associations of professionals

concerned with the enhancement of special needs education and should support the creation and dissemination of newsletters or journals as well as the holding of regional meetings and conferences.

82. International and regional meetings covering issues related to education should ensure that special educational needs are addressed as an integral part of the debate and not as a separate issue. As a concrete example, the issue of special needs education should be put on the agenda of regional ministerial conferences organized by UNESCO and other inter-governmental bodies.

83. International technical co-operation and funding agencies involved in support and development of Education for All initiatives should ensure that special needs education is an integral part of all development projects.

84. International co-ordination should exist to support universal accessibility specifications in communication technology underpinning the emerging information infrastructure.

85. This Framework for Action was adopted by acclamation after discussion and amendment in the Closing Session of the Conference on 10 June 1994. It is intended to guide Member States and governmental and non-governmental organizations in implementing the Salamanca Statement on Principles, Policy, and Practice in Special Needs Education.

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